

Safety Simply Stated



Message from City Safety Officer, Michael Alio

AB1127 was a bill that passed in 2000 which changed the landscape of penalties against employer's for safety violations and increased the chance of a safety prosecution for managers and supervisors. What is a safety prosecution? In California, prosecutors have had the ability to bring criminal charges in a workplace incident against managers, supervisors, and lead personnel for decades. With the enactment of AB1127, these charges are now felony counts.

Under Labor Code section 6425, criminal penalties apply to "any employer and any employee having direction, management, control, or custody of any employment, place of

employment, or any other employee, who willfully violates any occupational safety or health standard, order, or special order, causing death or permanent or prolonged impairment."

The Cal/OSHA Reporter recently reported that in "the 10,000 workplace investigations Cal/OSHA conducts each year, its Bureau of Investigations looks into only about 200 cases for referral to prosecuting authorities." With the prosecutions that have been successful, the case law has made it clear that supervisors and managers are responsible for the safety of their employees.

Prosecutors look for arrogance and deception

when deciding to prosecute a manager or supervisor following a workplace fatality.

How can these situations be avoided?

1. Integrate safety into your project and job planning.
2. Keep documentation and ensure employees have received mandated safety training.
3. Conduct thorough accident investigations recognizing trends and doing something about those trends.
4. Involve employees in safety!! Ask them for tips on how to do the work safer!

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Special points of interest:

- *Wellness & Safety Affair Winners*
- *Why Prevent Accidents*
- *Beating the Heat*
- *Success-Based Safety: Construction & Maintenance Division*
- *Back Safety Quiz*

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RECENT FATALITIES IN CALIFORNIA

PASADENA: On June 30, a tree trimmer was electrocuted when tools he was using hit a 100/120 volt line.

NAPA: On June 30, a welder attempting to remove slag from a pipe, that he had climbed 70 feet into, was killed when his torch cut the welding hoses and started a fire.

BURBANK: On June 18, a 25 year old worker was killed when a ladder slipped out from under him, causing him to fall 25 feet.

PORTERVILLE: On June 9, a 17-year old laborer was killed when the forklift he was operating overturned, when one of its tires entered a drainage ditch.

2004 Wellness & Safety Affair Update

By May Jong, Training Coordinator

This year's Wellness & Safety Affair lived up to its reputation. It was a successful event. The Safety Office and the Employee Assistance Program cosponsored the one-day event, which was held at the Main Library. More than 1,200 employees attended the event which was open from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. Food vendors included: Dales Diner, Fabe's Natural Gourmet Cookies, Harbor Area Farmer's Market, Subway, & Wild Oats. Health and Safety vendors included: St. Mary Hospital, Memorial Hospital, and Community Hospital PacifiCare, WIC Program, Division of Rehabilitation, Industrial Shoe Company, American Red Cross, and CARE Evaluators.

Grand prize winners are as follows:

- **Grand Prize #1—Staying Fit in Long Beach.** Includes 6-months

membership for 24-Hour Fitness and 2 orientation sessions with a personal trainer and goody bag. The winner was Beverly McKay, Community Development.

- **Grand Prize #2—Enjoying Long Beach.** Includes overnight stay, luxury accommodations for two at the Westin Long Beach, \$100 gift certificate for dinner for two at the Tides on Pine and Harbor Cruise. The winner was Cathy Hastings, Technology Services.
- **Baby Grand #1— Beach Chair & Accessories.** The winner was Alemayehu Mengesha, Health Department.
- **Baby Grand #2—Toolbox.** The winner was Tony Neal, Financial Management.

- **Baby Grand # 3—Gourmet Food Basket donated by Vans Gift Baskets.** The winner was Sabino Rodriguez, Parks, Recreation & Marine.

- **Baby Grand # 4—\$100 Gift Certificate to Sportsmart.** The winner was Marzy, Financial Management.

- **Baby Grand #5- \$1,000 Full Body Scan donated by Community Hospital.** The winner was Violet Ribas, Long Beach Energy.

Congratulations to all the Winners!



Why Prevent Accidents???

By: Laurie Browning, Department Safety Officer, Parks, Recreation and Marine

Why is it so important to prevent accidents? Do you view accident prevention as simply a way to avoid getting hurt? Do you work safely just because you want to? Perhaps you view accident prevention as a way of keeping your department happy or your supervisor off your back. Maybe you do it because you have been told to. There are many reasons an employer wants employees to work safely. But people need a better reason to work safely than just because the department says so. They must have a personal reason.

Your reason may be your family. What would they do if you were to get hurt? How about your hobbies? Would you still be able to enjoy them with a serious disability?

What you do for a living is how you achieve goals you have set for yourself. One goal may be paying for the education of your children. You may plan to buy a home or a car. Or you may want to get married after saving enough money. Maybe your goal for now is to make it to your next vacation and enjoy some time off. Whatever your goals may be, they all connect in some way to what you do for a living. Attaining your goals could be impacted by a serious or disabling injury.

A safety program is designed to help you reach your goals. It is not there just to make your work harder, or slower, or to meet some governmental guidelines. Safety and accident prevention programs are designed to

PROTECT YOU so that you reach your personal goals. When an unsafe work habit is pointed out to you, it is done to help you by eliminating obstacles or job hindrances AND to insure that you get home all in one piece.

Every time you approach a project, every time you pick up a tool, every time you start a piece of equipment or machinery, think SAFETY. Look for what can go wrong and eliminate that possibility BEFORE your goals come to an abrupt end.

*"Take Safety personally:
Make it a part of your life goals"*



Beating the Summer Heat

Once again we are entering the season when we have to pay attention to heat related illnesses. Supervisors should know the symptoms and take quick action when heat-related problems take place. Here are some tips from *Occupational Health and Safety* for workers and supervisors to follow:

- ❖ Drink cool water in small amounts frequently. Employees working in heat should avoid alcohol, coffee, tea, and caffeinated soft drinks, which cause dehydration.
- ❖ Dress appropriately and wear lightweight, loose fitting clothing. Use sunscreen and wear a hat when working outside.
- ❖ Work in well ventilated areas. Provide spot cooling in work areas of high heat production.
- ❖ Schedule heavy work for cooler parts of the day. Short, frequent work/rest cycles are best when heat is intense.
- ❖ Know the signs of heat stroke and take prompt action. Get emergency medical attention immediately if someone exhibits confusion, loss of consciousness, flushed face, hot and dry skin, or has stopped sweating. Recognize and provide first aid for heat stress, heat exhaustion, heat cramps, and other heat related illness.
- ❖ Watch out for other hazards. Use common sense and monitor other environmental hazards that often accompany hot weather, such as smog and ozone.



Success-Based Safety: Construction and Maintenance Division

By: Jerry Wolfe, Department Safety Officer, Department of Long Beach Energy

Ongoing changes in the way business is done in the Construction and Maintenance Division at Long Beach Energy represents a successful departure in the way things have always been done.

After a number of Industrial Safety and Hygiene educational sessions, the Construction and Maintenance Division management, supervision and line workers began a review of the existing work practices. Examination of a few key job functions (critical tasks) showed that failure of the existing protective measures might have caused a serious incident where employees or the public could have been injured, equipment could have been severely damaged, or production could have been significantly impeded. While the incidence of serious events in the division was very low, the existing practices left very little room for error. In light of this review, decades

old practices were modified to improve the margin of safety.

It is very easy however, to fall into the trap of complacency because sometimes nothing stands in the way of progress more than past success. As is stated in the often referred to quote, "If you always do what you have always done, you'll always get what you always got". Lack of serious incidents does not rule out the probability of occurrence.

To minimize future risks, several steps are being taken. To improve air quality work processes were modified to include the use of monitoring equipment that detects the presence of toxic air contaminants and flammable atmospheres. Once the monitoring equipment was provided to the crews, it became evident that toxic air contaminants were being generated. It was then necessary to outfit the crews

with exhaust ventilation equipment to purge and dilute the workspaces. This next step is currently under way.

Organizing work to limit the amount of potentially damaging noise that employees are exposed to is another example of successful incorporation of safety into the work process. Noise sources are exponentially additive when they are generating noise at the same time. Two pieces of equipment each generating 90 decibels (dB) of sound pressure will together generate an overall sound pressure of 93 dB. According to the regulations, there is a finite dose of noise to which employees can be exposed. Dose depends on how long employees are exposed to high noise levels. At the worksites as you add more pieces of equipment, noise levels increase and so does the dose. One approach undertaken by Construction and Maintenance is to alter the sequence of work in order to

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Continuation: Success-Based Safety: Construction and Maintenance Division

By: Jerry Wolfe, Department Safety Officer, Department of Long Beach Energy

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reduce the number of pieces of equipment in simultaneous operation. Equipment such as, generators, compressors, compactors, and pneumatic tools are shut down when not in use. Distance from the noise sources and sound absorbing materials are also techniques that were implemented. Protection of the employees' hearing is now built into the work process. Now that the overall work-site noise levels are reduced, hearing protection devices are obviously more effective because the sound pressure levels are lower. This is important as recent research has shown that noise levels once thought safe can in fact cause permanent hearing loss.

Another safety measure involves handling heavy construction material. At times the construction crews use thick metal plates to cover the holes they create in the streets. The metal plates are stored in the yard and loaded by crane onto the work trucks for transport to the work site. A large nut is welded into the middle of the plate and a bolt is threaded into the nut. This is how the plate is lifted and placed on the truck. During one such lifting evolution, the threads on a nut stripped as the plate was raised just a few inches. The plate crashed back down onto the

pile. There were no injuries and no other damage. As a result of this incident the work process was changed. Prior to this incident the metal plates were stored in one pile. When the workers were finished with the plate they would place it back onto the pile. Now, two piles are used. Once a plate from Pile # 1 is used it is placed on a second pile next to it. This will continue until each plate in the Pile #1 is used, and then the process will be reversed. Plates from Pile # 2 will be placed onto Pile #1. This ensures that the plates are "rotated" preventing the same plate from being used over and over again while the bottom plates are rarely used. Once again as a result of the task review safety has been incorporated into operations.

Reexamining how we do our daily tasks to find areas where simple changes can make a difference is critical. The idea is to build into the daily tasks a different way of doing things that improve safety while not dwelling on performing "Safe Work Practices". Safe Work Practices are important, but building safety into process is better. As a result, work site safety begins to become an operationally managed function.

The Construction and Maintenance Division managers and supervisors have

successfully demonstrated leadership with their efforts to review and change work processes and make them become functional parts of the daily production. The result is obvious to the workers, and the efforts of leadership can certainly be felt at the worksite. Incidents force downtime and decreased production. Reducing the factors that cause downtime and decreased production is a success. As the Construction and Maintenance Division builds safety into production practices, safety becomes a production enhancement, which by all measures is successful management.



Safety is the "Key to Success"

Back Problem Quiz

True or False

1. A back injury can be painful but it won't affect your daily activity.
2. Nerves keep your spinal column in place and keep your back strong.
3. Poor physical condition can cause back pain.
4. Diet and exercise have no effect on your back.

5. To prevent fatigue, you should move around frequently instead of staying in one position all day.
6. Sitting helps rest and relax your back.
7. An important part of lifting is to plan the lift before you attempt it.
8. It's better to lift a big load in one trip rather than to waste time breaking it into smaller loads.

9. Always let your legs do the work when you lift.
10. It's better to push than to pull heavy objects.



****Answers will be listed in next month's issue of Safety Simply Stated!**



August 2004

Citywide Employee Safety Training Calendar

(Scheduled Classes as of July 29, 2004)

Dates	Course	Time(s)	Location
August 3	Traffic Control/Safety Awareness (4 hrs)	7:30 am – 11:30 am	Harbor Department, 925 Harbor Plaza Drive, 5th floor, training room
August 3	Traffic Control/Security Officer (4 hrs)	12:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Harbor Department, 925 Harbor Plaza Drive, 5th floor, training room
August 4	Traffic Control/Security Officer (4 hrs) 2-sessions AM/PM	7:30 am – 11:30 am & 11:30 am – 3:30 pm	Harbor Department, 925 Harbor Plaza Drive, 5th floor, training room
August 5	Traffic Control/Coning Competent Person (8 hrs)	7:30 am – 4:30 pm	Harbor Department, 925 Harbor Plaza Drive, 5th floor, training room
August 10	Traffic Control/Coning Competent Person (8 hrs)	7:30 am – 4:30 pm	Harbor Department, 925 Harbor Plaza Drive, 5th floor, training room
August 11	Traffic Control/Safety Awareness (4 hrs)	7:30 am – 11:30 am	Harbor Department, 925 Harbor Plaza Drive, 5th floor, training room
August 11	First Aid (Module 2) (4 hrs) 2-sessions AM/PM	8:00 am – 12:00 pm 12:30 pm – 4:30 pm	American Red Cross, 3150 E. 29 th Street, Classroom 2 NOTE: Parking is available in the back lot near classrooms
August 10 (Tentative)	Body Mechanics Training (2 hrs)	TBD	TBD Note: for LBE employees
August 18 – 20	Defensive Driver's Training (4 hrs) 2-sessions AM/PM	8:00 am – 12:00 pm & 12:30 pm – 4:30 pm	Harbor Department, 925 Harbor Plaza Drive, Location: 8/18 & 8/19, 3 rd floor, Planning Conference Room 8/20, 5 th floor Conference Room (Plum Room)
August 12 (Tentative)	Body Mechanics Training (2 hrs)	TBD	TBD Note: for LBE employees
August 25	Bomb Threat Awareness (Partial (Module 4) (1 ½ hr)	8:30 am – 10:00 am	PD, WPSS, 1835 Santa Fe Avenue, Community Room
August 25	Follow-the-Book Training (1 ½ hr)	10:00 am – 11:30 am	Main Library, 101 Pacific Avenue, Meeting Room 1
August 31	Ergonomics Office Training (1 hr)	2:00 pm – 3:00 pm	LBE, 2400 E. Spring Street, Auditorium
TBD	Asbestos)&M (8 hrs)	TBD	LBE, 2400 E. Spring Street, Auditorium



- NOTE: Course dates and time are subject to change without notice.

- Please be advised that HR will request a JV charge point from departments who have employees signed up for training and do not show up for the class.

- If you have any questions, please contact May Jong, Risk Management @ may_jong@longbeach.gov

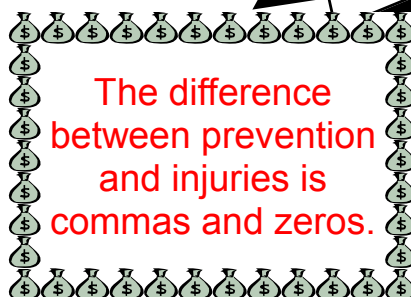
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*Working together to Serve in
Safety Related Matters*

Office Ergonomics Quiz

Answers From Last Month.....

1: How should the mouse be positioned with respect to the keyboard?

- *Near the keyboard at the same height or slightly above the keyboard.*

2: How should the monitor be placed if the lower lens of a bifocal is used to view the screen?

- *20 inches away or less with the top of the screen about 30 degrees down from eye level*

3: If you are injured on the job, what should you do?

- *Request and complete an incident report form from your supervisor*

4: True or false: The keyboard should be approximately at your elbow height when seated.

- *True. The wrist should be straight with no vertical or horizontal flexion or extension. If the keyboard is higher than the elbow, the edge of the desk may cut into the forearm of the typist. A lower keyboard may work if the keyboard is angled away from the typist. If it is flat, the wrist will need to bend back while typing.*

5: The chair should be adjusted to at least provide support to what part of the back?

- *The lumbar region.*

6: True or false: People who work in offices don't have to worry about workplace health and safety.

- *False. Office workers can get ergonomic injuries such as repetitive strain injury. Other hazards include indoor air quality, chemicals that might be stored in the office; loose wires, etc.*

7: Which of the following activities involve repetitive motion?

- *All of the above activities can require repetitive motion.*

8: True or false: If no pain is noticed while doing repetitive task than you do not have to worry about cumulative trauma.

- *False. Pain from cumulative trauma may appear days or years later.*

9: If you have a question about health and safety at work, you can talk to:

- *Any of the above*

